

REMARKS

Claims 11-17 and 25-30 are pending in the application. Claims 25-30 have been withdrawn from consideration. The Examiner rejected Claims 11-17. Applicants herewith submit a Request for Continued Examination under 37 C.F.R. § 1.114.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner rejected Claims 11 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 1,561,044 (hereinafter "Alexander '044"). Applicants respectfully submit that Alexander '044 does not disclose or suggest a plate including a plurality of ribs, at least one of the ribs defining an aperture, whereby the aperture is substantially surrounded by the at least one rib, as called for in Claim 11.

Alexander '044 discloses sheet or plate 10, shown in Fig. 1, with flanges arranged to form projections of trapezoidal configuration. The projecting flanges are formed of elements cut from sheet or plate 10 and bent from the plane thereof. The projections include upper flange 11 and pair of inclined flanges 12 and 13. Applicants respectfully submit that the flanges projecting from plate 10 do not define apertures and do not substantially surround the aperture. Because Alexander '044 does not disclose or suggest a plate including a plurality of ribs, at least one of the ribs defining an aperture, whereby the aperture is substantially surrounded by the at least one rib, as called for in Claim 11, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection of Claim 11, and Claim 12 depending therefrom.

The Examiner rejected Claims 11-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,266,786 (hereinafter "Grimes et al. '786"). Applicants respectfully submit that Grimes et al. '786 does not disclose or suggest a substantially rectangular-shaped plate, as called for in Claim 11, as amended.

Grimes et al. '786 discloses two-phase contactor 10, shown in Fig. 1, including a plurality of disks 16 mounted on shaft 13 for rotation therewith. Each disk 16, shown in Figs. 2-3, includes a plurality of arcuately spaced outwardly extending projections 21 mounted on the

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surface thereof. Nowhere does Grimes et al. '786 disclose disk 16 having a substantially rectangular shape. In contrast, Grimes et al. '786 discloses disk 16 being substantially circular. Were disk 16 rectangular, as called for in Claim 11, as amended, disks 16 would have less contact area with liquid 12 in operation. Therefore, rectangular disks 16 are counterindicated for the application of contactor 10 because contactor 10 ideally has disks 16 in optimal contact with liquid 12. A circular shape of disk 16 provides the optimal surface area for the application of Grimes et al. '786. Moreover, the word "disk" denotes a circular plate and nothing in Grimes et al. '786 would counsel a person of ordinary skill in the art to use anything except a circular plate, such as disk 16, in two-phase contactor 10. Because Grimes et al. '786 does not disclose or suggest to a person of ordinary skill in the art a substantially rectangular-shaped plate, as called for in Claim 11, as amended, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection of Claim 11, and Claims 12 and 13 depending therefrom.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejected Claims 14-17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Grimes et al. '786. Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 14-17 are patentable for at the least reasons advanced above with respect to Claims 11-13 and therefore respectfully request withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of Claims 14-17.

It is believed that the above represents a complete response to the Official Action and reconsideration is requested.

In the event Applicants have overlooked the need for an extension of time or payment of fee, Applicants hereby petition therefor and authorize that any charges be made to Deposit Account No. 02-0385, BAKER & DANIELS.

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If any questions concerning this application should arise, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned at 260/424-8000.

Respectfully submitted,



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October 27, 2005
DATE